

PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA.

VOL. I.

DECEMBER, 1845.

No. 4.

Stated Meeting of Council; September 22, 1845.

DONATIONS.

The Foreign Corresponding Secretary presented, in reply to the circular,

From Mr. Bell. Two MS. accounts of Huntingdon county; written by the Donor.

The Domestic Corresponding Secretary presented a letter from Mr. Simon Stevens, of Lancaster; intimating that he had discovered the minutes of the Committee of Safety of Lancaster, kept during the Revolution.

Donations made September 22, 1845:

From Jacob Wolle, of Bethlehem. Notes and Observations on the American Revolution; Notes and Observations on the Pine lands of Georgia; Topographical and Statistical Manual of the State of New York; Westminster Grammar, London, 1751; Introductory Lecture to a Course on History and Geography; MS. account of a visit of Indians to Nazareth, in 1792; MS. account of a visit of Indians to Bethlehem, in 1792; Fourteen Miscellaneous MSS.; Sundry Historical Pamphlets.

From Robert Thursten. A spoon, found in the grave of Hessians, killed at Red Bank.

From Col. John Goodman. Minutes of the Committee of Defence, appointed by the citizens of Philadelphia, at a town meeting, held Aug. 26, 1814.

From E. H. Reichel. An Essay on Female Education.

From the New Jersey Historical Society. Their Circular, Constitution and By-laws.

From the Historical Society of the University of North Carolina. Their First Report; Volume of Tracts, relative to the history of N. C.; and an Address delivered before the Society.

From Robert A. Parrish, Jr. A "Chart of some of the Northern Counties of Pennsylvania."

From James Glentworth. Kendall's Travels through the Northern parts of the U. S., in 1807-8-9, 3 vols.

From Miss Heckewelder, of Bethlehem. Some Observations on the Indian Natives of this Continent, by Anthony Benezet.

From John Jordan, Jr. The Despatches of Hernando Cortes. Translated by George Folsom.

The following gentlemen were elected.

As a Corresponding Member—Cyreneus M. Smith, of Wilkesbarre.

As an Honorary Member—Hon. Robert K. Reading, of Flemington, N. J.

Donations made July 28th, 1845, and omitted to be noticed in the proceedings of that evening.

From James Glentworth. Humboldt's New Spain, 2 vols. ; Pinkerton's Geography, 2 vols. ; Proceedings of the Society of Cincinnati; Primitive Ages.

From John Jordan, Jr. Burke's European Settlements, 2 vols. ; Historical Collections of South Carolina, 2 vols. ; Weld's Travels in the U. S. and Canada ; American and West Indian Gazetteer, London, 1775 ; Debates in the Legislature of Pennsylvania, 1808-9 ; Memorial Days of the United Brethr

Stated Meeting of Council; October 27th, 1845.

The Foreign Corresponding Secretary communicated a letter in answer to the circular, from Professor Lemuel G. Olmsted, of Steubenville, Ohio ; accompanied by a MS. account of Erie County, Pa., written by the same gentleman.

The Domestic Corresponding Secretary read a letter from E. H. Reichel, of Nazareth; promising to communicate to the Society the result of his investigation into the history of Nazareth Hall, &c. Also, a letter from Josiah Emery, of Wellsborough, in answer to the circular, announcing his design to complete, for the archives of the Society, an account of Tioga county.

Mr. Belcher called the attention of the Council to a number of valuable Revolutionary papers, being principally letters addressed to General Washington, and which were said to exist in the hands of a gentleman near this city.

DONATIONS.

From John Jordan, Jr. Thacher's Military Journal ; Journal of Kentucky Volunteers in 1812-13 ; Strangers' Guide in Philadelphia for 1810 ; Hazard's U. S. Commercial and Statistical Register, 6 vols. ; Historical Sketch of Missions of the United Brethren ; Politician's Register for 1835 ; MS. copy of Brig.

Gen. Rufus Putnam's Speech to the Indians, 1792; Print of the first house in Bethlehem.

From Charles F. Ashmead. Five Nos. of the Congressional Register; Theism, a Prophecy.

From the Historical Society of Rhode Island. Volume of Historical collections; Documentary History of the destruction of the Gaspee; an Address delivered before the Society.

From Martin L. Stærer. Catalogue of Officers and Students of Pennsylvania College, Carlisle.

From the Historical Society of New York. Three volumes of their Historical Collections.

From George H. Moore. Historical Collections of N. Hampshire, 3 vols.

From H. Spencer. Reminiscences of his own times, by John Trumbull.

From John F. Watson. Twenty-seven pamphlets, &c., on historical subjects.

From C. A. Poulsen, Jr. Sanderson's lives of the Signers, 9 vols.; Robertson's History of America, 2 vols.; Revolutionary orders of Gen. Washington.

From James Glentworth. Original letter of Washington.

From Charles Miner. History of Wyoming.

From W.B. Rally. Memoirs of the Historical Society of Ratisbon, for 1843. Three Nos. of the Journal of the Ferdinandæum Museum.

From Wm. Carr, of Doylestown. Copy of a charter and grant by Wm. Penn to the Free Society of Traders.

From Samuel Hazard. Annual Report of the Inspectors of N. York Prisons.

From E. D. Ingraham. A Collection of Pamphlets.

From Samuel Hood. Defence of the ancient historians by the Bishop of Down: a presentation copy, with the author's signature.

From Col. A. J. Pleasanton. Five old account Books, of firms who supplied the French fleet at Boston, in 1781.

The following gentlemen were elected—

Contributing Members—Peter A. Browne, Francis Jordan, Cadwalader M. Wickersham, C. H. Housekeeper, and S. L. Clement.

Corresponding Members—Doct. Abraham L. Huebner and Maurice C. Jones, of Bethlehem; and Thomas Meredith, of Luzerne co.

Quarterly Meeting of the Society; November 3d, 1845.

Mr. Tyson gave notice that he would, at the next Quarterly meeting, (February 2d, 1846,) move an amendment to the Constitution, as follows:

"No person, after the adoption of this amendment, shall be entitled to a Diploma, or deemed a contributing member of this Society, who, after his election, shall not subscribe the Constitution and pay into the hands of the Treasurer a fee of initiation, the amount of which shall be declared by resolution of the Council."

The following preamble and resolution were offered and carried.

Whereas, there doubtless exists in this community a large amount of valuable manuscripts, relating to our earlier colonial, and revolutionary history, in the possession of persons who would be likely to give them to the Society; And, whereas, it is the duty of the Society to preserve, by every reasonable means, the materials for history, which are constantly perishing; therefore,

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to prepare an address to be published, which shall be submitted to the President for his approval, inviting the donation of manuscripts, &c., for the archives; and that the President, on behalf of the Society sign the same.

It was further resolved, that the Librarian's name and place of residence be added to the address.

Stated Meeting of Council; November 24, 1845.

Mr. Reed read several interesting letters written by Robert Morris, in the year 1776, which on motion were referred to the Committee on the Bulletin.

DONATIONS.

From Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia.
Journal of Councils, 9 vols. and Digest of Ordinances, 1 vol.

From John Jordan, Jr. Cooper's History of America; Shallus's Chronological Tables; Indiana Annual Register; Plain Facts—a pamphlet on Indian affairs; Late Association for Defence further encouraged; United Brethren's Missionary Intelligencer, 8 vols; History of Kentucky and Life of Boone; History of American Troops in the Late War, under Cols. Fenton and Campbell; Scripture Pronunciation; Volume of Pamphlets; Lives and Opinions of B. F. Butler and Jesse Hoyt; Proceedings of Young Mens' Missionary Society; Brief Statement of the Rise and Progress of Quakers; Ancient Testimony of Quakers against Slavery; Act of Incorporation and Rules of the United Brethren; Report of the Committee for the Civilization of Indian Nations; Ordinances of Philadelphia, with an Address of Washington, 1798; Appeal to the Churches on behalf of Africa; Sermon on Peace, Charity, and

Toleration ; Life and Speeches of Henry Clay, 2 vols. : Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Several Subjects ; Printed papers concerning the Athenæum ; Rise and Progress of Homœopathic Medicine : Loskiel's History of the Missions ; Rafinesque's Works ; Records of Patriotism and Love of Country ; View of the State Capitol, Harrisburg ; View of Lancaster ; Map of Bethlehem ; Two Original Drawings by Mr. Reinke.

From Samuel Reinke. Twelve Views of Moravian buildings, &c.

From Thos. C. James, Jr. Engraved Portrait of Nicholas Waln.

From James Glentworth. Original letter of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

From Rev. Peter Wolle. Illuminated copy of the Psalms of the Ephrata ; Platter used by the Monks of the Ephrata.

From Lewis Jones, Jr. The Keystone, from 1836 to 1841, 1 vol.

From Robert Bettle. Two original letters from Gen. Gates to Gen. Irwin, dated 1st and 19th of March, 1777. Also an original letter from Thomas Paine to Gen. Irwin, dated November 27, 1784.

From Thomas Wistar, Jr. Return of a jury, dated Dec. 20, 1683, in relation to a bridge over Pemma Pacca.

From Robert A. Parrish, Jr. The explanation of Reed's Map of Philadelphia ; Liberia Herald ; Two MS. surveys of land in St. George's Hundred, Newcastle County, upon Delaware ; Minutes of the Manufacturing Company, dated 1789.

From William Duane. History of Christ Church, by Rev. Dr. Dorr.

The following gentlemen were elected :

Contributing Members :—John William Wallace ; Theophilus B. Horwitz, M. D. ; Joseph M. Thomas ; Solomon Wyatt ; William White ; Henry McCall, Jr. ; Thomas Fisher ; John T. Maull ; Charles Ashmead.

Corresponding Members :—Charles Huston, of Centre county ; Dwight N. Lathrop and Warren J. Woodward, of Luzerne county ; John T. Bell and L. W. Brodhead, of Monroe county.

Honorary Members :—Professor John Maclean, of Princeton, N. J. ; Rev. Dr. Charles Burroughs, of Portsmouth, N. H. ; John Ross, of the Cherokee Nation.

PAPERS READ BY W. B. REED, ESQ.

[The following letters are copied from the originals on file in the Department of State, at Washington ; and have peculiar interest as illustrating the condition of things in Philadelphia, in the month of December, 1776, when the British army, under Sir William Howe, was traversing New Jersey and approaching the Delaware river. They have never before been published. They illustrate also the public services, at a period of great trial, of one of the most distinguished citizens of Philadelphia. The history of these letters is briefly this.

On the 12th of December, 1776, Congress adjourned, to meet in Baltimore on the 20th. Robert Morris, George Walton, (of Georgia,) and George Clymer, remained in Philadelphia, taking charge of certain executive duties in the absence of Congress, though without any express authority from that body.

On the same day Congress authorized Mr. Morris to borrow a sum not exceeding \$10,000 for the use of the Marine Committee.

On the 21st of December, 1776, Congress passed the following resolutions, among others.

Resolved, that Robert Morris, George Clymer and George Walton, Esquires, be a Committee of Congress with powers to execute such continental business as may be proper and necessary to be done at Philadelphia.

Resolved, that the above resolve be communicated to Messrs. Morris, Clymer and Walton, by Mr. President, and that he inform the said gentlemen that Congress approve their care of the public business, as signified in Mr. Morris's letters. Also that Mr. Morris be informed Congress highly approve his plan of fitting the continental frigates at Philadelphia for sea with all possible expedition.

No other entries appear on the Journals of Congress, except from time to time notices of the receipt of the following letters.]

To the Honorable John Hancock, President of Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, December 13, 1776.

SIR,--The enclosed letter from the General was delivered to me open by Mr. Walton ; who judged it prudent to examine the contents before it went forward ; and in which I concur with him, as it was probable some service might result to this place from their being known, and I flatter myself that essential service will be rendered to the Continent thereby. As soon as I saw this authentic account of the enemy's design to cross the Delaware above the Falls, I waited on Gen. Putnam, and proposed that the frigate Randolph and sloop Hornet should be sent to sea immediately, as it was plain they would be of no use here, and I have received certain advice that there was not any British men of war in our

Bay. The General very readily consented ; and I have this afternoon given Capt. Biddle and Capt. Nicholson their instructions, signed by me in behalf of the Marine Committee. They will depart early in the morning, and I entertain the most sanguine hopes of their escape. The Hornet goes for Carolina with the shot ; but part of the flour was landed previous to this new determination. I have presumed to go one step further in this navy business; and I flatter myself I shall be entitled to the approbation of Congress, whether I meet it or not ; for my intentions are good, and I procure myself much trouble with the sole view of serving the cause. On viewing the frigate Delaware, I thought it possible to get her away before Gen. Howe could get here ; I have therefore set about it stoutly. A number of people, scarce as they now are here, are at work on her: the sails will be bent, anchors to the bows, stores on board, and every thing in some forwardness to-morrow ; I have sent an express to the General, informing him of my design, and requesting him to send down Captain Alexander, his officers and such seamen as are willing to go with him ; and if it is possible to get her away, I shall order her to Baltimore, under your own care. If I fail in this attempt, you only add a little expense of labour to the loss, for the ship may in that case be destroyed. However if Gen. Howe will give me but a few days more, and lord Howe keep away his myrmidons, I shall have the pleasure to despatch the Randolph, Hornet, Delaware, Security, Fly, and a large ship loaden with tobacco ; all of which you may deem are saved from the flames. The removal of Congress has left me much other business. I am paying your debts, at least those of the Marine Committee, and directing fifty necessary things to be done, and with Gen. Howe's permission, shall be glad to finish the business you would wish to have done here ; but if Mr. Howe advances, I shall push off and leave him to finish the business in his own way. I am told there is a letter in town that mentions Gen. Clinton's arrival at Rhode Island, and that he took peaceable possession of it, as all the inhabitants to a man abandoned the Island. But tell Mr. Ellery I have not seen this letter, nor will I vouch for its authenticity. You will please to receive enclosed some pleasing letters for the Marine Committee, and with perfect esteem and respect, I remain your obedient, &c.

(Signed,) —

ROBT : MORRIS.

To the Honorable John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, December 14, 1776.

SIR,—I wrote you last night, and enclosed you a letter from the General, and several other letters, then expecting to send that letter by Mr. Walton, this morning ; but that gentleman having just now delivered me another open letter from the General, dated

yesterday, at Trenton Falls, I do myself the honor to enclose it herein ; and as Mr. Walton does not set off so soon as he expected, I have sent out after an express, but have some expectation that Col. Jenifer will be the bearer of both these letters, as I understand he is just going off for Baltimore. They will certainly go in half an hour by one or the other. As our enemies are still kept at bay on the other side [of the] Delaware, I cannot help flattering myself with the expectation of some favourable event that will save the city. I shall certainly remain here as long as I can with safety, and during my stay the Congress may depend on my utmost exertions for the public service. The Randolph and Hornet are gone down this morning. We are at work on the Delaware, and a chartered brigantine. Capt. Green sails in an hour. If they give us time, I shall attempt to get the Washington frigate into a place of safety.

I have the honor to remain, &c.,
ROBT: MORRIS.

To the Honorable John Hancock, Esq., President of Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, December 16, 1776.

SIR,—The enclosed letter from Gen. Wooster, was delivered to me by Mr. Walton. It contradicts the report respecting Rhode Island, mentioned in my last, and I am glad of it ; but it still appears as if that was Mr. Clinton's object. I take the liberty to enclose you a letter I received yesterday [from] Col. Cadwalader ; and am truly sorry to add that the intelligence respecting Gen. Lee comes confirmed through another channel, with several circumstances that stagger my faith, although I was yesterday very unwilling to give credit to Mr. Symes's and Capt. Murray's stories. The person who came to town last night has been examined by the Council of Safety, who, as I am told, believe his account. Being out of town yesterday, I have not seen any of them, or him, therefore am not master of all the particulars ; but he reports that some of the tories had given notice to the enemy, that the General lodged at a certain house, five miles distant from his army ; in consequence a party of Light Horse, about fifty, surrounded the house at day break : the General had an aid-de-camp and ten men with him ; they defended themselves in the house for two hours, when the men offered to surrender, alleging that the General was not there. They answered that they knew he was in the house, and if he did not immediately surrender himself, they would burn the house, and him in it ; in short the General was obliged to appear, and he promised to surrender himself, on conditions they would treat him like a gentleman, and an officer. The moment they got him they mounted him on a

horse and galloped off with him, not even allowing him time to get his hat. Nor did they take any of his party, but left them to do as they pleased. The Aid-de-camp is wounded. These are the only particulars that I have heard; and I do not pretend to vouch for the truth of them, but pray Heaven the whole may be a fiction. The loss of General Lee at this time, is in itself a severe stroke, and the effect it will have on the spirits of our shattered army, will add greatly to it. The express I sent to General Washington is returned, and brought me a letter from him of the 14th, at night. He was then some miles beyond Coriel's ferry; but says nothing to me respecting the military operations. The enclosed letter from Messrs. Adams, Gerry, Ellery, and Whipple, came under cover; and Mr. Peters has desired me to send the letter from the Governor of Virginia.

The sudden departure of the Congress from this place, seems to be a matter of much speculation, and people who judge by appearances think they have been too precipitate; be that as it may, many things are thrown into great confusion by it; and I find ample employments in applying remedies whenever I can. The unfinished business of the Marine and Secret Committees, I intended to confine myself to; but I hear so many complaints, and see so much confusion from other quarters, that I am obliged to advise in things not committed to me. Circumstanced as our affairs now are, I conceive it better to take the liberty, and assume some power, than to let the general interest suffer. Much money is wanted for the public service, and it must be sent up immediately, as the Militia of our Country are at length turning out, and call for the advance. The lower parts of West Jersey are also in motion, and they want money. The troops returned from Canada call aloud for their pay, and they should have it instantly, as they very generally promise to enlist, when they have spent what is due to them. Mr. Smith, the loan officer, is not here, or I believe it would be in my power to procure a good deal of money through that channel. On his return I will assist all in my power. I suppose Congress will not determine on a hasty return to this place, nor do I think it advisable, until the enemy are actually gone into winter quarters; for a severe frost may in a few hours enable them to cross the Delaware above the Falls, so that if they remain in that neighbourhood you would have to be subject to perpetual alarms. At the same time, it may be depended on, that great inconveniences will arise in every department during your absence. To remedy this as much as possible, I think a Committee should be sent here, with such powers as Congress may judge proper, in order that they may regulate the business of the Continent necessary to be done here. There is the greatest scene of confusion in the management of the Continental horses, wagons and expresses, that ever was ex-

hibited. It was bad enough before Congress departed, but it is ten times worse now ; and Jacob Hiltgewan, a very honest man, will run mad soon, if not properly assisted or relieved in this department. In short the Committee you send should have full power to do whatever may be necessary to put every department on a systematic footing. Mr. Clymer, Mr. Walton, and myself, will bestir ourselves, and advise or assist in such things as we think absolutely necessary, until you appoint a committee. And as the Board of War did not leave any orders for their Secretary, we have desired him to stay and assist us, until he receives orders ; we hope the Board will excuse us this liberty, as Mr. Peters will be useful here. The Committee must have the command of money to answer various purposes, as the calls for it are loud, large and constant. Should the enemy retire to Brunswick or New York, it may, and I believe will be, best, for Congress to return as soon as that is certain. Upon the appearance of their retiring, I have detained the cruizers, intended to turn inward bound vessels from our Capes, and shall not send them, unless the scene changes again, and it should be evident this city must fall into their hands. Capt. Alexander is come down from camp, and we are at work on the Delaware. But if the enemy go back, I will attempt the getting her regularly fitted for sea. I have despatched the ship loaden with tobacco for France, but in the present situation of things it did not seem eligible to write on political subjects to any of our agents there. If fortune will once more smile on us, I will find opportunities to communicate the glad tidings. You will please to receive herewith sundry French letters, lately brought here by Monsieur Coles, who will visit you in Baltimore, in due time. As I don't recollect any members of Congress that are perfect masters of the French, I put them in the hands of Paul Fooks, the sworn Interpreter, and his translations go with the originals. I also send herewith some letters to the Marine Committee, particularly a very pleasing one from Captain Jones, of the Alfred. I have sent to General Putnam, to inform him of this Express ; I am now expecting his despatch. The papers and books of the Marine Committee of Correspondence, and Secret Committee, I sent to Christeen, with a proper person to take care of them; so they are convenient either for this place or Baltimore. I shall take the liberty to address you whenever occurrences require it, and with sincere regard remain, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,
ROBT : MORRIS.

To the Honorable Committee of Secret Correspondence.

PHILADELPHIA, December 16, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,—Since I wrote the President this morning, a young gentleman came up from Chincoteague, where he had landed out of the Sloop Independence, (Capt. Young,) belonging to the Continent; this sloop was from Martinico, bound hither, but was chased into that place by a large frigate. The sloop has on board a quantity of blankets, coarse cloths, and near 1000 muskets, which I will take care of. Capt. Young staid behind sick; and she is now commanded by Lieut. Robinson, who had no paper to write on, but sent up word he would push round for this place, as soon as he could. The goods are what was ordered by the Secret Committee; and the Andrew Doria will bring a good cargo from St. Eustatia, where she is arrived. The Sachem is also arrived at Martinico; but no news yet from Monsieur Hortaley. You have enclosed the letters from Mr. Bingham and Mr. Dean; the latter complaining, as I long have expected he would, for want of advices and remittances. In short, if the Congress mean to succeed in this contest, they must pay good executive men to do their business as it ought to be, and not lavish millions away by their own mismanagement. I say mismanagement, because no man living can attend the daily deliberations of Congress, and do the executive parts of business at the same time. I do aver there will be more money lost, totally lost, in horses, wagons, cattle, &c., &c., for want of sufficient numbers of proper persons to look after them, than would have paid all the salaries *Payne* ever did or ever will grumble at. Mr. Dean has had a hard situation; I foretold it long since; and unless you employ some man of talents to collect materials and keep the Commissioners abroad constantly informed of what is passing here, you never will have the consequence, nor your agents that dignity they ought to have. I should be glad you would return me these letters or copies of them, and I will reply from thence; they have been with me but a few minutes, and I will not keep the express any longer, as I expect you are hungry as Hawkes after the news from France. I cannot keep a copy of this, but in haste remain very sincerely,

Gentlemen, your devoted humble servant,

ROBT: MORRIS.

Letter from Robert Morris, with enclosures giving an account of Gen. Lee being prisoner.

PHILADELPHIA, December 17, 1776.

SIR.—Mr. Walton, Mr. Clymer, and myself thought it advisable to open the enclosed letter last night, that we might judge if

the expense of another express should be incurred, or detained by the Post, which we concluded to do, as I had wrote you the unfortunate fate of Gen. Lee before. I am sorry to inform you that the Roebuck and Falcon, men of war, are in the Delaware Bay, and two bomb ketches are said to be in the offing. On receipt of this news (which is certain) I have hired a pilot boat and sent her with a letter to Capt. Biddle, and all of the other vessels outward bound, desiring them to stop or come back; so that my labours appear to be lost, and sorry I am for the disappointment; however, it is likely the first north-wester may give us an opening to push them out. I have just heard that a party or parties of the enemy were yesterday at Morristown and Haddonfield, in the Jerseys, opposite to this, and distant about 7 to 9 miles. What their views are I cannot say, but by the appearances and the men of war below, and the bomb ketches being said to have sailed from New York, it would seem as if their parties meant to make their way to Red Bank, erect works to command the chevaux-de-frise, and then to come up with the ships. This however is mere matter of speculation. Col. Griffin is, I understand, gone over with about 800 men, but I fear he will not be strong enough for them.

I have the honor to be very respectfully,

Sir, your obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

To the Honorable John Hancock, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, December 21st, 1776.

SIR,--The express that carries you this letter has just called on me, saying that he came from the convention of New York. I thought it prudent to open the letter and know whether the business it respected could be done here, or whether it must be sent forward; and finding it must go forward, I only detain him to make this apology, and to inform you that the Sloop Independence, commanded by Lieut. Robinson, (Capt. Young being left behind sick,) pushed out from Chincoteague, where she first put in, and notwithstanding she was chased by six of the enemy's cruizers, at our Capes, she got safe up here, and is now landing the cargo. I have determined to send 850 blankets that came in her, to General Washington, and have informed him that they were imported for the use of the new recruits; but as the inclemency of the weather, and the exceeding severe duty of the troops now with him entitled them to every comfort we can afford, we submit to him whether to make use of them for their use or not.

The cloths I will deliver to Mr. Mease, with orders to have them made up as fast as possible. Nine hundred and nineteen muskets shall be delivered to Mr. Commissary Towers, to wait the orders

of Gen. Washington or the Board of War; and I hope one or other of them will send orders as soon as possible.

The Council of Safety want money, and have sent an express for a supply. I have borrowed sufficient for the Marine Department, although the disbursements are considerable. Capt. Biddle will get more seamen than we expected; the Delaware is getting ready, and I have ordered the Fly, Capt. Warren, down the Bay, to watch the enemy's ships, and bring us word if they should quit that station. I have sent an express across the Jerseys to Capt. Baldwin, of the Wasp, to cruise outside of them, to give notice to inward bound vessels, and to having stationed the Hornet, Capt. Nicholson, (who attempted to get out to sea, but could not,) in Christeen creek mouth, to act in conjunction with a large galley of this State in defence of that creek, as there are many valuable stores up it. I shall get the sloop Independence hove down, and some little damage she received at Chincoteague, repaired, and then send her also to watch the enemy's ships. There are a large number of waggons in the city, and as I fear Gen. Howe does not yet give up his plan of getting possession of it this winter, I will order a good part of the salt provisions now in the Commissary's care, to be carried up to Lancaster, as we certainly ought to have inland magazines of provisions and military stores;—but I long to hear from you, that I may judge whether Congress approves of these things which I have undertaken for the sake of serving my country. Mr. Smith is not yet returned, and I am very sorry for it, as I do think a great deal of money might be borrowed by this time. I am very fearful that this bad weather will sicken the associators, and break up our campaign, whatever may be its effects on the enemy. There are some prisoners on board the enemy's ships at our Capes, that have wrote up to me to procure their release, amongst the rest Capt. Morgan, of the Bermuda sloop, that carried Mr. Dean to France, who was returning here with despatches and some goods, and was unfortunately taken near Cape May. I will send a letter for Capt. Hammond, of the Roebuck, open, to Henry Fisher at Lewis Town, to be sent off by a flag, in which I shall assure him that we have suffered great numbers, and masters, mates, and men, belonging to merchant ships taken by our cruisers, to depart, without thinking of detaining them for an exchange, and recommend his releasing these people, or he will oblige us to alter that part of our conduct, as this is strictly true in a number of instances that have come under my notice. I hope Congress will approve of my design.

I am with great regard and esteem,
Sir, your obedient humble servant,
ROBT: MORRIS.

[Read 26th.]

*To the Honorable John Hancock, Esq., President of Congress,
Baltimore.*

PHILADELPHIA, December 23, 1776.

SIR,—I have the pleasure to inform you that the Continental Fleet, in this port, is increased by the arrival of the Andrew Doria, Capt. Joseph Robinson, from St. Eustatia; which place she left by the beginning of this month, and next day fell in with a British sloop of war, of twelve guns, which she took, after a very obstinate engagement, in which the Andrew Doria had two men killed, some wounded, the main mast shot through, and some other damage. The Sloop had many men wounded; three shot through her mast; her sails shot to pieces, and much damage done to her. This is one of the Sloops the Lords of the Admiralty ordered Admiral Gayton to fit out at Jamaica, and Mr. Jones, who commanded her, has the King's commission as Master and Commander. He defended her obstinately, and is certainly a brave man. I will desire the Council of Safety to take his parole, and send him to some safe place. Capt. Robinson manned this prize and ordered her in for this Port, for it is next to an impossibility for them to get in; nothing but the fast sailing of the Andrew Doria, and the extreme vigilance of the Captain brought her safe past the enemy's ships: one of which lies in the Cape May Channel. The cargo on board this Brig consists of 208 dozen pair of woollen stockings; 106 dozen pair of Worsted Stockings; 215 Sailors' Jackets; 23 Great Coats; 50 pieces of Dutch Plains; 30 ps. 900 yards Flannell; 45 ps. blue, brown, and white Cloth; 463 Blankets, 218 pieces, 7-8 yds. Linens, containing 6795 Dutch ells; 496 Muskets; 326 pairs of Pistols; 100 lbs. Powder, and 14,101 lbs. Lead, for account of the Continent. I received last night a letter from General Washington, per Col. Moylan, requesting me to hurry Mr. Mease, to have soldiers clothes made up with all possible diligence. He says muskets are not wanted there; but that comfortable clothing is exceedingly wanted. Col. Moylan advises by all means to send up the stockings and great coats, now arrived, which I think to do; but I shall tell the General they were intended for the new levies, and leave him to dispose of them as he may think most beneficial to the service. The linens, plains, and cloths, I will deliver to Mr. Mease, with orders to have them made up; but he will find much difficulty, as all the tailors, or near all, are at the Camp, and the Council of Safety dare not order them down, for fear the rest will follow. The blankets, also, shall go to the General, to be disposed of as he

may think proper. The pistols, muskets, powder and lead, had best, I think, be sent to Lancaster; but wish to hear from the Board of War in answer to what I said before on this subject. The sailors' Jackets must be put on board the fleet, being much wanted there. I propose that Capt. Robinson should put all the seamen prisoners on board the Randolph frigate, Capt. Biddle, and that the latter should compel them to do duty, whether they enter or not, only following the example set us by the British act of Parliament.

Mr. Davis Bevan, of this city, was taken about five weeks ago coming into our Capes, and carried to New York; from thence brought round in the Roebuck and suffered to land at Cape Henlopen, under a promise to return. He told me that he heard Capt. Hammond and other officers say, that they are now determined to put a total stop to our trade. Six Frigates were sent to cruise off Georgia and Carolina; six off the Capes of Virginia; and six off our Capes: they have fixed signals and stations so as to keep a complete line along our coast, and are determined to keep their stations throughout the winter, if possible. He says only part of the troops sent to Rhode Island are to remain there; the remainder are going to Carolina. Bevan is an intelligent man, and had an opportunity of hearing and learning these things from Lord Howe's under secretary, or clerk, with whom he ingratiated himself, and was employed in writing for him on board the Eagle. I have sent Mr. Bevan down with the letter mentioned in my last, to Capt. Hammond; and I hope it will procure the discharge of Capt. Morgan, and the prisoners on board the fleet. The schooner Wasp, commanded by Lieut. Baldwin, has brought into Egg Harbour a schooner loaded with Indian corn and oats, bound from the lower counties to New York. He has sent up the master and five or six other prisoners here. They had been on board the Falcon man-of-war, Capt. Singee, and subscribed the oaths of allegiance, certificates of which were found on them. I sent these papers to the Council of Safety, who committed the men to jail, as there is no Judge of the Admiralty in the Jerseys, and Judge Ross is at Lancaster. I think it advisable to send waggons to Egg Harbour for the corn and oats to feed the Continental horses in this city. These articles are very scarce here, and will bear the carriage; but I will consult General Putnam and the waggon master on this subject. As to the vessel, I am of opinion it would be best to sell her without condemnation, as the proofs of her guilt are clear and incontestable, and she lies in too much danger to wait for the usual forms; however, Congress or the Marine Committee will please to give a positive order what must be done in this respect. Baldwin had retaken a French schooner, that had been taken going out of our Capes, by one of the men-of-war cruising there.

He was bringing her into Egg Harbour, when a fleet of fifteen sail hove in sight, two of which were two-deckers. One or two frigates, and an armed brig, pursued him so close that he was obliged to abandon his prize, and get into the inlet as fast as he could. This happened last Wednesday. Being short of provisions, he intends coming in here, and I wish he may escape the enemy.

You will perceive, sir, that our fleet will be pretty numerous here; although their force is but small, compared to the dangers that surround them. I have conversed with several of the Captains, and formed a plan for their getting safe out to sea, and taking such merchantmen with them, as may be ready; they approve of the plan, and I hope will execute it. But we must have time to get ready, and they must act with great vigilance and spirit, to effect it. Upon this occasion I cannot help saying that I am very uneasy, as I am neither instructed what to do, nor vested with the proper powers to act as may appear best. I must, therefore, request that Congress, or the Marine Committee, will either instruct me pointedly what to do, or give me proper authority to act for the best; for the object is important, and if misfortunes happen, which is very probable, it would be hard that I should hereafter be blamed, when the event is known, for measures that appear previously to be well calculated for the public good. The vessels to be got out are the Randolph, Delaware, Andrew Doria, Independence, Hornet, Fly, and Musquito, with many valuable merchant ships. The Lexington, Sachem, and Wasp may be hourly expected in, if they escape the enemy. Sailors are scarce, tradesmen at the camp, and a kind [of] stupor seems to have seized every body that ought to give us assistance, so that it is inconceivable how slowly all work goes on, and with how much difficulty we can get any thing done. I have applied to the Council of Safety to order down some tradesmen, to finish the Delaware if possible. They wish, but fear to comply; and if they do not she must, after all, remain here. General Washington desires me to remain here as long as possible, and promises to give me notice of any immediate danger. He thinks the enemy are only waiting for two events, and when they happen they will prosecute their designs against this city: that is for ice to cross the river, and for the 1st of January, when most of his army will disband; and he says you might as well attempt to stop the winds from blowing, or the sun in its diurnal, as stop them from going when their time is up. Gen. Sullivan brought him about 2000 men; Gen. Gates about 600; and his whole force now consists of about 5000 men, besides the city militia. It is true the country militia are coming in, but I suppose as many will leave him the 1st January, as will join before that time; and if it will not be possible for him to save this city out of the hands

of the enemy, after they cross the Delaware, on this view of things, I think we ought to hazard every thing to get the ships out ; and I shall advise Mr. Mease, Mr. Tod, and all others that have Continental stores, to be prepared for removing them.

It is very mortifying for me, when I am obliged to tell you disagreeable things; but I am compelled to inform Congress that the Continental currency keeps losing its credit. Many people refuse openly and avowedly to receive it ; and several citizens that retired into the country, must have starved if their own private credit had not procured them the common necessaries of life, when nothing could be got for your money. Some effectual remedy should be speedily applied to this evil, or the game will be up. Mr. Commissary Wharton has told the General that the mills refuse to grind for him, either from disaffection, or dislike to the money ; be it as it may, the consequences are terrible ; for I do suppose the army will not consent to starve. At present I don't recollect any thing to add to this letter, but as other occurrences may happen, I shall give you the trouble of more letters. I think it is time that Mr. Pluckrose, the express I sent down with the letters to you last Tuesday, should return, unless detained by some purpose of Congress ; by him I sent a number of French letters, &c.

I am with great respect,

Sir, your obedient servant,

ROBT : MORRIS.

P. S. I am informed by Mr. Moylan, that Col. Guyon, (I think that is the name,) was taken prisoner with Gen. Lee. He is the Col. that came over in the Hancock and Adams, Capt. Smith, from Nantes.

*To the Honourable John Hancock, Esq., President of Congress,
Baltimore.*

PHILADELPHIA, December 27, 1776. }
10 o'clock, A. M. }

SIR,—Capt. Peters informs me he has just seen a letter from Col. Cadwalader, wrote late last night to the Council of Safety, wherein he says he has no account from General Washington; but from private information, that he can depend on, our victory at Trenton has been complete. The killed and wounded, and prisoners are very considerable. That we have taken sixteen pieces of their cannon ; a waggon load of Hessian arms, with some Hessians were sent over the Ferry. Col. Cadwalader was to cross over from Bristol this morning before day, with his whole

force. General Putnam is now sending him a reinforcement of 1500 men, and the gondolas under General Mifflin, who is returned from a successful excursion. We shall change the face of affairs, and I hope soon to see you back here. Capt. Peters will soon follow this, but he must go via Lancaster.

I am respectfully yours,

ROBT: MORRIS.

*To the Honorable Benjamin Harrison, Esq., Member of Congress,
Baltimore.*

PHILADELPHIA, December 29th, 1776.

DEAR SIR,—I received, yesterday, yours of the 25th by Express, with the sundry enclosures, with which I shall do the needful. But I think you should send copies by some of the outward bound vessels from Virginia and Maryland. There is a new ship of Mr. Arch'd Buchanan's near ready to sail for France from Baltimore; and I fancy your son must have either the Aurora, Graty's brig, or the Snow about sailing, and I don't yet hear of any British cruizers at the Capes of Virginia. If any do appear pray inform me of it. I must send you an order to receive from the Secret Committee about £2700, and send it down to Ben by the first opportunity. I have received the money here from Mr. Hare, and used it for the Secret Committee, who must repay it; and Ben is to lay it out in tobacco, concerning which I wrote him two posts ago. I shall make additions to the letter of our Commissioners, suited to our present circumstances, and send you copies in due time. I detained this express until this morning, hoping to give you some news from General Cadwalader, but no accounts are yet come in. I wrote to General Washington, and said every thing I could with decency, to encourage a pursuit of our enemies with his whole force. Our militia are daily coming in; and I really hope to see him strong enough to drive these invaders out of New Jersey, and then Congress may come back here. I believe it would have an excellent effect were they to return immediately; our friends would be inspirited, and our external and internal foes would form favourable judgments of our supports and strength from it. A few days more will determine whether it will be proper or not; and as soon as I can I will write a public letter on that subject. Your invitation to join you is very civil, but you know I have, always been satisfied with Philadelphia and the Hills; and I have throughout this alarm, been determined not to quit, until fairly done off. At the same time I have been constantly prepared, my things packed up, horses and carriages ready at any

moment, and constant means of intelligence had they approached. I beg my compliments to all my friends; and tell Ben Levy I expect he will be a great politician now the great council have removed to his quarters. We had a merry Christmas at Smith's in spite of the times. The absence of my family sits grievously hard on me, as I never parted with them before; but my time is too much employed to dwell much upon any subject; and I am now pleasing myself with the thoughts of having them back. I dine at the Hills* to-day, and have done so every Sunday. Thus you see I continue my old practice of mixing business with pleasure. I ever found them useful to each other.

I am with great affection,

Your friend and servant,

ROBT : MORRIS.

* The word should probably be spelt "hills"—this being the name of his country seat, or the name he gives it on this occasion. He owned at this time Laurel Hill.

